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California Polytechnic State University

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Contact: Manzar Foroohar
(805) 756-2068

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Two Speakers To Kick Off Cal Poly Middle East Series Jan. 27

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly Pomona History Professor Mahmood Ibrahim and Israeli peace activist Susy Mordechay will kick off a new Cal Poly speaker series on the history of the Middle East and the current crisis there at 6 p.m. Jan. 27 in Chumash Auditorium on campus. The series is being offered as part of a history course taught by Professor Manzar Foroohar.

Ibrahim, chair of the History Department at the Pomona campus, will speak on the "Historical Context of the Conflict and Prospects for Peace in the Middle East."

Mordechay will discuss "The Assault on Palestinian Civilian Life, 2000-2002."

Ibrahim was born in the West Bank town of Ramallah and immigrated to the United States in 1966. He earned a bachelor's degree from the City College of New York in 1973 and earned a master's in 1974 and a doctorate in 1981 from UCLA.

Ibrahim was awarded two Fulbright-Hays Fellowships and a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship to pursue his research and studies of Islamic science. He was a visiting lecturer at UCLA and UC Riverside before going to Bir Zeit University on the West Bank, where he served as chair of the Department of History, Geography and Political Science from 1985 to 1989.

He is the author of two books, "Merchant Capital and Islam" and "The Oral History of the Intifada," which he worked on with Tom Ricks and Adel Yahya of the Tamir Institute in Jerusalem. The book contains a collection of interviews conducted with young men who "moved the street" during the first intifada (the Palestinian uprising) and an

analysis of their observations.

He has also written numerous articles and book reviews on the Middle East and North Africa, from the rise of Islam to the present.

Mordechay was born in Austria to parents who were refugees during World War II and who had lost their family in the Holocaust. She was raised and educated in Israel, where she earned a degree from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Later, she worked on her graduate program in linguistics at UCLA.

Since her return to Israel in 1992, she has pursued the cause of Palestinian rights and a just peace, according to Foroohar. In the past few years she has worked with various Israeli groups, including the Committee Against Home Demolitions, the Coalition of Women for a Just Peace, and Ta'ayush, an Arab-Jewish Partnership. During the current intifada, she has done extensive work in the occupied territories.

The Middle East speaker series will continue on Feb. 3 with a talk on Zionism by Hagit Borer, professor and chair of the Linguistics Department at USC, and a representative from the Israeli Consulate in Los Angeles. Additional talks are scheduled on Feb. 10, Feb. 17, Feb. 24 and March 10.

All presentations are free and open to the public. They are sponsored by Cal Poly's College of Liberal Arts and History Department. For more information, contact Foroohar at 756-2068 or mforooha@calpoly.edu.

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California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

805.756.7266

polynews@calpoly.edu